

Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation
Water Resources Division
Water Rights Bureau

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
For Routine Actions with Limited Environmental Impact

Part I. Proposed Action Description

1. *Applicant/Contact name and address:* Glacier Ranch LLC, 3530 US Hwy 2 E, Kalispell MT 59901
2. *Type of action:* Application for Beneficial Water Use Permit 30031036-76LJ
3. *Water source name:* Groundwater from two drilled wells
4. *Location affected by action:* Section 9, 10, 15 & 16, T 29N R 21W Flathead County
5. *Narrative summary of the proposed project, purpose, action to be taken, and benefits:*
The DNRC shall issue a water use permit if an applicant proves the criteria in 85-2-311, MCA are met.
6. *Agencies consulted during preparation of the Environmental Assessment:*
(include agencies with overlapping jurisdiction) MT DEQ, Flathead County Planning & Zoning, MT DFW & P website, Natural Heritage Program and the MT Historical Society.

Part II. Environmental Review

1. Environmental Impact Checklist:

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

WATER QUANTITY, QUALITY AND DISTRIBUTION

Water quantity - Assess whether the source of supply is identified as a chronically or periodically dewatered stream by DFWP. Assess whether the proposed use will worsen the already dewatered condition.

Determination: These wells are drilled into the deep artesian aquifer. Immediate and direct dewatering is not a concern.

Water quality - Assess whether the stream is listed as water quality impaired or threatened by DEQ, and whether the proposed project will affect water quality.

Determination: Trumbull Creek will not be affected.

Groundwater - Assess if the proposed project impacts ground water quality or supply. If this is a groundwater appropriation, assess if it could impact adjacent surface water flows.

Determination: After years to decades of pumping from this source, long term impacts may be observed.

DIVERSION WORKS - Assess whether the means of diversion, construction and operation of the appropriation works of the proposed project will impact any of the following: channel impacts, flow modifications, barriers, riparian areas, dams, well construction.

Determination: The wells were drilled in May of 2005.

UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

Endangered and threatened species - Assess whether the proposed project will impact any threatened or endangered fish, wildlife, plants or aquatic species or any "species of special concern," or create a barrier to the migration or movement of fish or wildlife. For groundwater, assess whether the proposed project, including impacts on adjacent surface flows, would impact any threatened or endangered species or "species of special concern."

Determination: Although Bald Eagles sometimes nest within a mile of this site, no impacts are anticipated.

Wetlands - Consult and assess whether the apparent wetland is a functional wetland (according to COE definitions), and whether the wetland resource would be impacted.

Determination: No impacts.

Ponds - For ponds, consult and assess whether existing wildlife, waterfowl, or fisheries resources would be impacted.

Determination: No impacts

GEOLOGY/SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE - Assess whether there will be degradation of soil quality, alteration of soil stability, or moisture content. Assess whether the soils are heavy in salts that could cause saline seep.

Determination: Some changes may be seen, but there is no know areas of saline seep on this site.

VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY/NOXIOUS WEEDS - Assess impacts to existing vegetative cover. Assess whether the proposed project would result in the establishment or spread of noxious weeds.

Determination: This development will have manicured lawns, parks and flower beds.

AIR QUALITY - Assess whether there will be a deterioration of air quality or adverse effects on vegetation due to increased air pollutants.

Determination: No impacts are anticipated.

HISTORICAL AND ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES - Assess whether there will be degradation of unique archeological or historical sites in the vicinity of the proposed project.

Determination: No historic sites were identified on this parcel.

DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AND ENERGY - Assess any other impacts on environmental resources of land, water, and energy not already addressed.

Determination: No other impacts were identified by this EA.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS - Assess whether the proposed project is inconsistent with any locally adopted environmental plans and goals.

Determination: This subdivision is very consistent with other similar develops in the valley.

ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES - Assess whether the proposed project will impact access to or the quality of recreational and wilderness activities.

Determination: No impacts.

HUMAN HEALTH - Assess whether the proposed project impacts on human health.

Determination: None are expected.

PRIVATE PROPERTY - Assess whether there are any government regulatory impacts on private property rights.

Yes___ No_X_. If yes, analyze any alternatives considered that could reduce, minimize, or eliminate the regulation of private property rights.

Determination: NA

OTHER HUMAN ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES - For routine actions of limited environmental impact, the following may be addressed in a checklist fashion.

Impacts on:

(a) Cultural uniqueness and diversity? Possibility of some changes.

(b) Local and state tax base and tax revenues? Substantial positive increase in tax revenues.

- (c) Existing land uses? This parcel will now be developed and no longer the natural setting that it was.
- (d) Quantity and distribution of employment? Slight temporary changes during construction.
- (e) Distribution and density of population and housing? Moderate impacts.
- (f) Demands for government services? Some impacts due to development.
- (g) Industrial and commercial activity? Slight impacts with the proposed hotel.
- (h) Utilities? Greater demand for power and gas from the development.
- (i) Transportation? Moderate increase in traffic due to the development.
- (j) Safety? Increases in traffic will cause additional safety concerns.
- (k) Other appropriate social and economic circumstances? No other were identified.

2. ***Secondary and cumulative impacts on the physical environment and human population:*** Even though this is a substantial development, at this time no known secondary and cumulative impacts are expected.
3. ***Describe any mitigation/stipulation measures:*** Any mitigation measures needed for this development should have been addressed by Flathead County's Zoning and Planning office during their review and approval of this project.
4. ***Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives to the proposed action, including the no action alternative, if an alternative is reasonably available and prudent to consider:*** This was the only alternative considered. The no action alternative would prevent the project from moving forward.

PART III. Conclusion

Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required? No

If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for this proposed action: Because no secondary, cumulative nor substantial impacts were identified by this action, the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for the action.

Name of person responsible for preparation of EA:

Name: Wes McAlpin

Title: Water Resources Specialist

Date: August 11, 2008